

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PGOV, OVIP

SUBJECT: SUMMARY PORTION OF PRESIDENT' S MAY 22 STATEMENT

FOLLOWING IS OPENING SUMMARY PORTION OF PRESIDENT' S STATE-
MENT ISSUED TODAY, MAY 22 ON THE WATERGATE AFFAIR. FULL
TEXT AVAILABLE BY USIA WIRELESS FILE.

BEGIN TEXT OPENING PORTION:

QUOTE

ALLEGATIONS SURROUNDING THE WATERGATE AFFAIR HAVE SO ESCALATED
THAT
I FEEL A FURTHER STATEMENT FROM THE PRESIDENT IS REQUIRED AT THIS
TIME.

A CLIMATE OF SENSATIONALISM HAS DEVELOPED IN WHICH EVEN SECOND- OR
THIRD- HAND HEARSAY CHARGES ARE HEADLINED AS FACT AND REPEATED AS
FACT.

IMPORTANT NATIONAL SECURITY OPERATIONS WHICH THEMSELVES HAD NO
CONNECTION WITH WATERGATE HAVE BECOME ENTANGLED IN THE CASE.

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AS A RESULT, SOME NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE PUBLIC THROUGH COURT ORDERS, THROUGH THE SUBPOENAING OF DOCUMENTS AND THROUGH TESTIMONY WITNESSES HAVE GIVEN IN JUDICIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL PROCEEDINGS. OTHER SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS ARE NOW THREATENED WITH DISCLOSURE. CONTINUED SILENCE ABOUT THOSE OPERATIONS WOULD COMPROMISE RATHER THAN PROTECT THEM, AND WOULD ALSO SERVE TO PERPETUATE A GROSSLY DISTORTED VIEW -- WHICH RECENT PARTIAL DISCLOSURES HAVE GIVEN -- OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THOSE OPERATIONS.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT IS THREEFOLD:

-- FIRST, TO SET FORTH THE FACTS ABOUT MY OWN RELATIONSHIP TO THE WATERGATE MATTER.

-- SECOND, TO PLACE IN SOME PERSPECTIVE SOME OF THE MORE SENSATIONAL -- AND INACCURATE -- OF THE CHARGES THAT HAVE FILLED THE HEADLINES IN RECENT DAYS, AND ALSO SOME OF THE MATTERS THAT ARE CURRENTLY BEING DISCUSSED IN SENATE TESTIMONY AND ELSEWHERE.

-- THIRD, TO DRAW THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN NATIONAL SECURITY OPERATIONS AND THE WATERGATE CASE. TO PUT THE OTHER MATTERS IN PERSPECTIVE, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE THE NATIONAL SECURITY OPERATIONS FIRST.

IN CITING THESE NATIONAL SECURITY MATTERS, IT IS NOT MY INTENTION TO PLACE A NATIONAL SECURITY "COVER" ON WATERGATE, BUT RATHER TO SEPARATE THEM OUT FROM WATERGATE -- AND AT THE SAME TIME TO EXPLAIN THE CONTEXT IN WHICH CERTAIN ACTIONS TOOK PLACE THAT WERE LATER MISCONSTRUED OR MISUSED.

LONG BEFORE THE WATERGATE BREAK- IN, THREE IMPORTANT NATIONAL SECURITY OPERATIONS TOOK PLACE WHICH HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY BECOME ENTANGLED IN THE WATERGATE CASE.

-- THE FIRST OPERATION, BEGUN IN 1969, WAS A PROGRAM OF WIRETAPS. ALL WERE LEGAL, UNDER THE AUTHORITIES THEN EXISTING. THEY WERE UNDERTAKEN TO FIND AND STOP SERIOUS NATIONAL SECURITY LEAKS.

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-- THE SECOND OPERATION WAS A REASSESSMENT, WHICH I

ORDERED IN 1970, OF THE ADEQUACY OF INTERNAL SECURITY MEASURES.
THIS RESULTED IN A PLAN AND A DIRECTIVE TO STRENGTHEN OUR INTELLIGENCE

OPERATIONS. THEY WERE PROTESTED BY MR. HOOVER, AND AS A RESULT
OF HIS PROTEST THEY WERE NOT PUT INTO EFFECT.

-- THE THIRD OPERATION WAS THE ESTABLISHMENT, IN 1971,
OF A SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT IN THE WHITE HOUSE. ITS PRIMARY
MISSION WAS TO PLUG LEAKS OF VITAL SECURITY INFORMATION.
I ALSO DIRECTED THIS GROUP TO PREPARE AN ACCURATE HISTORY OF
CERTAIN CRUCIAL NATIONAL SECURITY MATTERS WHICH OCCURRED UNDER
PRIOR
ADMINISTRATIONS, ON WHICH THE GOVERNMENT'S RECORDS WERE
INCOMPLETE.

HERE IS THE BACKGROUND OF THESE THREE SECURITY OPERATIONS INITIATED
IN MY ADMINISTRATION.

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END TEXT OPENING PORTION.

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